श्री अबू आसिम आजमी : सर, मेरा सप्लिमेंटरी क्वैश्चन बहुत जरूरी हैं । ...(**व्यवधान**)... एक मिनट टाइम दे दीजिए ताकि वह दोनों को जवाब साथ में दे दें ...(**व्यवधान**)...

شری ابو عاصم اعظمی: سر، میرا سپلیمنٹری کوئشچن بہت ضروری ہے ...مداخلت... ایک منٹ ٹائم دے دیجئے تاکہ وہ دونوں کا جواب ساتھ میں دے دیں ...مداخلت...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please listen to the hon. Minister *(Interruptions)*

श्री सुरेश पचौरी : सभापति महोदय, चेयरमैन के द्वारा इस सम्बन्ध में समय-समय पर जो रुलिंग दी गई हैं और जो रूल की व्यवस्था हैं, तद्नुसार मिनिस्टर ऑफ स्टेट सम्बन्धित मंत्रालय के कैबिनेट मिनिस्टर की जिम्मेदारी पूरी कर सकता हैं और यह माना जाता हैं कि वह गवर्नमेंट को रिप्रिजेंट कर रहा हैं ...(**व्यवधान**)... और इसलिए मान्यवर, जब उन्होंने लिखित रूप मे यह दिया हैं, तो ...(**व्यवधान**)... ऐसा अनेक बार इस सदन में हुआ हैं । ...(**व्यवधान**)... ऐसा अनेक बार इस सदन में हुआ हैं । आप रुलिंग देख लीजिए कि मिनिस्टर ऑफ स्टेट ने डिबेट का रिप्लाई भी दिया हैं और प्रश्न का भी रिप्लाई दिया हैं । यह इस सदन की परम्परा हैं, प्रिसिडेंट हैं । ...(**व्यवधान**)...

श्री एस. एस. अहलुवालिया : सर, ...(**व्यवधान**)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ahluwalia, your point of order has been answered. Please settle down. *(Interruptions)*

श्री सुरेश पचौरी : और मिनिस्टर का मतलब होता हैं क्या-कैबिनेट मिनिस्टर, स्टेट मिनिस्टर, इवन डेपुटी मिनिस्टर । ...(**व्यवधान**)... इस सदन में और उस सदन में अनेक बार ऐसा हुआ कि ...(**व्यवधान**)... स्टेट मिनिस्टर ने ...(**व्यवधान**)... कैबिनेट मिनिस्टर को रिप्रिजेंट किया ...(**व्यवधान**)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Blind population in the country

*124. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has become home to the world's largest number of blind people;

(b) if so, how many eye donation banks are available in the country, particularly in Maharashtra State and how many of them donate eyes every year;

(c) how many optometrists pass out every year and considering our population, whether they are sufficient to fulfil patients requirements; and

(d) whether Government has set any target to eliminate blindness or control of blindness and if so, the details thereof?

†[ ]Transliteration in Urdu Script.

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) As per the World Health Organization estimates, out of total 37 million blind persons (Visual Acuity <3/60) in the world, 6.7 million are in India which is one-fifth of the total global blind population.

(b) As per the Eye Bank Association of India, Hyderabad, there are 500 Eye Banks/Eye Donation Centres in the country including 148 in Maharashtra. Around 30,000 donated eyes are collected annually in the country.

(c) There are about 6000 Optometrists in India and about 1200 pass out every year. More Optometrists are needed to fulfill patients' requirements for eye care in the country as the Ophthalmologists—para medical personnel ratio should be 1:4.

(d) As per the survey conducted during 2006-07, the prevalence of Blindness in the country has come down to 1% as compared to 1.1% during the year 2001-02.

The National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB) is committed to reduce the burden of avoidable blindness to 0.3% by the year 2020.

The following steps have been taken under NPCB to achieve the targets and for effective implementation of the programme:—

1. Setting up of State Blindness Control Societies and District Blindness Control Societies in States/UTs.
2. Providing Eye care facilities to the needy people at Primary, Secondary and Tertiary levels through Primary Health Centres, District Hospitals, Medical Colleges and Regional Institutes of Ophthalmology.
3. Strengthening of Eye Banks in Government/Voluntary Sector.
4. Financial support to NGOs for strengthening their existing infrastructure for Eye care and providing recurring grant for Cataract surgery, School Eye Screening and Eye Donation.
5. Organizing Eye Donation Fortnight from 25th August to 8th September every year to promote eye donation.
6. Screening of School Children for detection of refractive errors and providing free spectacles to poor children.
7. Strengthening of Regional Institutes of Ophthalmology/eye departments of Medical Colleges by providing assistance for development of paediatric eye units/low vision units/ retina units and training infrastructure.
8. Imparting training to Ophthalmic Surgeons from Government Hospitals/Medical Colleges for quality eye care.
9. Intensification of IEC activities Jo create awareness about eye care activities.

Shortage of wheat

*125. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state: